

Racing towards Energy Efficiency in Indiana

Every Memorial Day weekend, thousands of spectators converge at the Brickyard to watch high speed car races. “Drafting” or driving in the tailwind of a car, is a popular technique to save fuel. This drive to save energy extends beyond Indiana’s popular race track. Indiana works to improve the energy efficiency of low-income homes by partnering with the U.S. Department of Energy’s (DOE) Weatherization Assistance Program (Weatherization). Weatherization reduces energy costs for low-income households by increasing the energy efficiency of their homes, while ensuring their health and safety.

Low-income households typically spend 14% of their total annual income on energy, compared with 3.5% for other households. This burden becomes even more pronounced when energy prices soar. Low-income families often cut back on other necessities to pay their energy bills. Weatherization reduces home energy consumption, which provides a permanent boost to the household’s budget. The Division of Family and Children administers the program and 24 local agencies deliver services to eligible residents throughout the state.

MAKING A PIT STOP

A pit stop requires skilled mechanics to swiftly identify problems and make repairs to enhance the car’s performance. Similarly, Weatherization relies on professionally trained crews who use advanced technologies to identify energy problems and enhance the energy efficiency of a house.

Indiana crews use a priority list based on a computerized energy audit to determine the most cost-effective measures for each home. Diagnostic tools, like the blower door and manometer, are used to identify and mitigate air infiltration, duct leaks, and pressure imbalances. Crews test gas furnaces and appliances for carbon monoxide, an odorless, colorless gas, which can be deadly in large quantities.

NATIONAL WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM

Homes weatherized in 1999	68,000
DOE allocations in 1999	\$135 million
Average annual energy cost savings per household	\$300
Average space heating savings	25-30%
Energy benefits returned for every \$1 invested	\$2.10
Jobs supported	7,000

INDIANA

Homes weatherized in 1999 (with DOE \$)	1,490
DOE funding in 1999	\$3.8 million
Clients served in 1999	3,591
Elderly	15%
People with disabilities	16%
Families with children	45%

Weatherization does even more than make a house energy-efficient; it often saves lives. Diana Halprin*, a disabled client from Lafayette, and her son suffered from chronic headaches. When the situation worsened, Diana contacted Area IV, a local weatherization agency, for help. Crews conducted a carbon monoxide test on the gas range and found it was emitting dangerous levels of the deadly gas. The faulty appliance was replaced and weatherization measures were installed. Today, Diana and her son no longer suffer from headaches and they enjoy their warm, energy-efficient home.

GETTING THE GREEN LIGHT

Indiana accelerates the effectiveness of the Weatherization Program by leveraging resources and developing creative partnerships. Indiana uses core DOE funding to obtain additional dollars for the program. In 1999, Indiana's program leveraged over \$5 million, which enabled them to weatherize an additional 2,399 homes.

The Citizen's Gas Leveraging Program is an innovative collaboration between Weatherization, utilities, and various state programs. The program is designed to provide weatherization services to low-income households, educate clients on energy-efficient behavior, and develop payment plans for arrearages to prevent cut-offs. Program data is being tracked and results will be used to improve Weatherization Program delivery.

WINNING RESULTS

Weatherization produces significant energy savings for low-income families. Weatherization measures can decrease a low-income household's gas heating usage by nearly one-third, saving an average of \$300 per year. These savings allow clients to purchase essential goods like food and medicine.

Weatherization creates economic benefits for the community by reducing the export of energy dollars from the community. This keeps more money in the local economy and stimulates growth. If all low-income households in Indiana received Weatherization assistance, about \$1.8 million would be saved and circulated through the local economy every year. Weatherization also creates jobs. Indiana employs more than 100 people to operate its program. Additional jobs are created through subcontractors and material suppliers.

A VICTORY LAP

Indiana's Weatherization Program takes an active role in the community to educate people on responsible energy consumption. Weatherization recently sponsored the Energy Education Project, a collaborative effort between Weatherization and community organizations. The event was held at an Indianapolis museum for 600 children, the future

energy consumers. Weatherization staff discussed with the children ways to conserve energy in their home. In addition, special treats like energy puzzles, energy coloring books, and information about the Weatherization Program was circulated to children and parents. The project was a huge success for everyone involved.

In recognition of the important benefits the program creates for

Indiana, in 2000, Governor O'Bannon proclaimed October 30 as Weatherization Day. Weatherization agencies across the state held special demonstrations to exhibit the program's capabilities and explain Weatherization's many benefits.

WEATHERIZATION WORKS!

Weatherization produces an impressive array of benefits for low-income households and communities. Nationally, for every \$1 invested in the program, Weatherization returns \$2.10 in energy-related benefits. Weatherization measures reduce national energy consumption and curb demand for imported oil. Weatherization works for Indiana and America!

**Names have been changed to protect the privacy of the subjects.*



Indiana provided extensive weatherization services for these homeowners.



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, CONTACT:

Weatherization Assistance Program • U.S. Department of Energy, EE-42
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Visit the Weatherization Web site at: www.eren.doe.gov/buildings/weatherization_assistance
or call the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Clearinghouse at: 1-800-DOE-3732



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